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Current Population Reports

Population Characteristics

U.S. Department of Commerce
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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Persons of Spanish Origin in the United States: March 1985 (Advance Report)

INTRODUCTION

This report presents advance data on the demographic, social, and economic characteristics of persons of Spanish origin[1] in the United States. The data were collected by the Bureau of the Census in the supplement to the March 1985 Current Population Survey (CPS).[2] The characteristics presented in this report include age, sex, educational attainment, employment status, income, and poverty status. A more detailed report on the characteristics of the Spanish population is forthcoming.

This is the first of the CPS reports on persons of Spanish origin to present data on the Spanish population based entirely on postcensal independent estimates of Hispanics. These Spanish population estimates, derived independently of the CPS, were instituted as control totals for the CPS to eliminate annual fluctuations in the CPS Hispanic estimates and to establish a postcensal time series of Hispanic data comparable with the 1980 census information for Hispanics.

Independent postcensal estimates based on a preliminary methodology were first used as controls for the March 1982 CPS data on Hispanics. These data and an explanation of the preliminary methodology are presented in appendixes A and B, Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 396, *Persons of Spanish Origin in the United States: March 1982*. Subsequently, this methodology was refined and used to produce the March 1985 estimates shown in this report.

The March 1985 CPS estimates were developed using the 1980 census data on Hispanics by age and sex as a base. These 1980 figures were updated to 1985 by estimating (1) the number of Hispanic births, (2) the number of Hispanic deaths, (3) the number of immigrants of Hispanic origin, (4) the net movement of persons to and from Puerto Rico, (5) the change in the resident Hispanic personnel in the Armed Forces, and (6) the change in the Hispanic institutionalized population. The forthcoming final report, *Persons of Spanish Origin in the United States: March 1985*, will contain a detailed explanation of the refined methodology used to develop the March 1985 CPS independent estimates of the Hispanic population.

POPULATION GROWTH AND COMPOSITION

In March 1985, there were 16.9 million persons of Spanish origin in the United States representing an increase of about 2.3 million persons (16 percent) over the 1980 census figure of 14.6 million. This sizeable increase was the result of high fertility and the resulting large natural increase (i.e., excess of births over deaths) and of substantial immigration to the United States from Mexico, Cuba[3], and other Spanish-speaking countries of Central and South America.

The increase in the Spanish population between 1980 and 1985 (16 percent) was proportionately larger than that for the overall population (3.3 percent) and consequently, persons of Spanish origin constituted a larger proportion of the total population in 1985 than they did in 1980 (7.2 percent and 6.4 percent, respectively). (See tables 1 and 2.)

In March 1985, the Spanish origin population of the United States comprised approximately:

- 10.3 million persons of Mexican origin
- 2.6 million persons of Puerto Rican origin
- 1.0 million persons of Cuban origin
- 1.7 million persons of Central or South American origin
- 1.4 million persons of other Spanish origin[4]

[1]The terms "Spanish" and "Hispanic" are used interchangeably in this report.

[2]Information from the March 1985 CPS shown in this report is based on the civilian noninstitutional population of the United States and members of the Armed Forces in the United States living off post or with their families on post, but excludes all other members of the Armed Forces.

[3]A substantial number of Cubans entered the United States immediately following the official date of the 1980 census (April 1), and hence were not included in the 1980 census count of Hispanics.

[4]Unless otherwise noted, persons reporting "Other Spanish" origin are those whose origins are from Spain, or they are Spanish origin persons identifying themselves generally as Spanish, Spanish-American, Hispano, Latino, etc.

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Table 1. All Persons and Persons of Spanish Origin, by Type of Origin: March 1985 CPS and 1980 Census

(For the United States. Numbers in thousands. 1980 census data based on sample tabulations)

Origin	March 1985 CPS	1980 census
Total population	234,066	226,546
Percent	100.0	100.0
Total Spanish origin	7.2	6.4
Mexican	4.4	3.8
Puerto Rican	1.1	0.9
Cuban	0.4	0.4
Central or South American	0.7	[1]1.4
Other Spanish	0.6	
Not of Spanish origin[2]	92.8	93.6

[1]In the 1980 census, the "Other Spanish" category included persons from Spain, the Spanish-speaking countries of Central or South America, and Hispanic persons who identified themselves generally as Latino, Spanish-American, Spanish, etc. In the CPS, the category "Central or South American" is listed as a separate origin.

[2]Includes persons who did not know or did not report on origin.

Table 2. Persons of Spanish Origin, by Type of Origin: March 1985 CPS and 1980 Census

(For the United States. Numbers in thousands. 1980 census data based on sample tabulations)

Type of Spanish origin	March 1985 CPS		1980 census	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Spanish origin	16,940	100.0	14,604	100.0
Mexican	10,269	60.6	8,679	59.4
Puerto Rican	2,562	15.1	2,005	13.7
Cuban	1,036	6.1	806	5.5
Central or South American	1,722	10.2	[1]3,114	21.3
Other Spanish	1,350	8.0		

[1]In the 1980 census, the "Other Spanish" category included persons from Spain, the Spanish-speaking countries of Central or South America, and Hispanic persons who identified themselves generally as Latino, Spanish-American, Spanish, etc. In the CPS, the category "Central or South American" is listed as a separate origin.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

On the average, both the Spanish and non-Spanish populations had higher median ages in 1985 than in 1980. The median age of Hispanics was 25.0 years in March 1985, up from 23.2 years in 1980; the medians for the non-Spanish population were 31.9 and 30.6, respectively. Even though both populations were older in 1985, the Spanish origin population remained a much younger population than the non-Spanish population, reflecting the higher fertility levels among Hispanics. (See tables 3 and 4.)

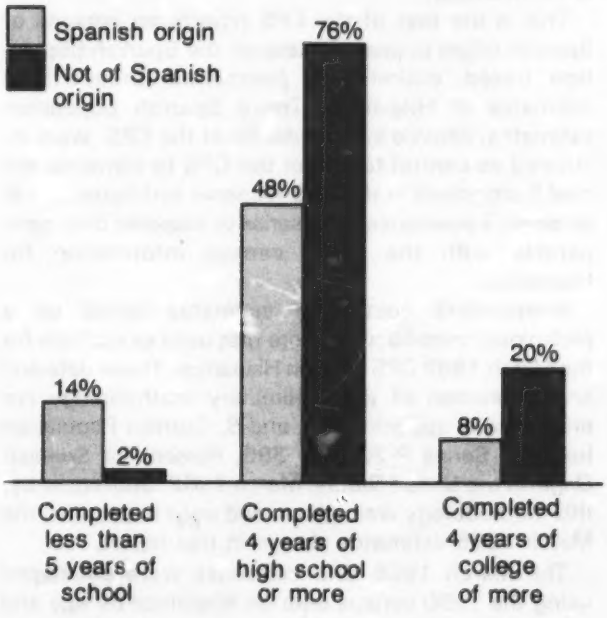
Except for the Cuban population, the median age for each of the Hispanic subgroups was significantly higher in 1985 than it was in 1980. In addition, the median age varied considerably among these subgroups in 1985: the Mexican and Puerto Rican groups had the youngest median ages, while the Cubans had the oldest median age (tables 4 and 5).

In March 1985, as in the past, Hispanics 25 years old and over had a lower educational attainment level than non-Hispanics. About 14 percent of Hispanics had completed less than 5 years of school, compared with only 2 percent for the comparable group of non-Hispanic persons. Furthermore, the proportion of high school graduates among Hispanics was only 48 percent, far below the 76 percent for non-Hispanic persons, and only 8 percent of Hispanics had completed 4 years of college or more as compared with 20 percent for non-Hispanics (table 5).

Educational differences also were evident among the Hispanic subgroups. For instance, only 42 percent of Mexican origin persons had completed high school while 63 percent of persons of Central or South American origin had achieved this educational level.

FIGURE 1

Educational Attainment of Persons of Spanish Origin 25 Years Old and Over: March 1985



There were 3.9 million families of Spanish origin in the United States in March 1985; 72 percent of these were married-couple families and 23 percent were families maintained by women with no husbands present.

Family composition varied markedly among the Hispanic groups. For example, about 16 percent of Cuban origin families were maintained by women with no husband present; in contrast, the corresponding pro-

Table 3. Persons of S[panish Origin, by Sex and Age: March 1985 CPS and 1980 Census

(For the United States, 1980 census data based on sample tabulations)

Age	March 1985 CPS			1980 census		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Total.....(thous[ands)..	16,940	8,441	8,499	14,604	7,274	7,329
Percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 5 years.....	10.7	10.9	10.4	11.3	11.6	11.0
5 to 9 years.....	10.1	10.4	9.8	10.5	10.8	10.2
10 to 14 years.....	9.7	9.9	9.5	10.2	10.4	10.0
15 to 19 years.....	9.1	9.4	9.0	11.0	11.4	10.7
20 to 24 years.....	10.5	11.4	9.6	10.8	11.2	10.5
25 to 29 years.....	10.0	9.7	10.3	9.5	9.6	9.3
30 to 34 years.....	8.2	8.5	8.0	7.9	7.9	8.0
35 to 44 years.....	12.6	12.3	12.9	10.8	10.5	11.1
45 to 54 years.....	8.1	7.9	8.3	8.1	7.8	8.5
55 to 64 years.....	6.1	5.6	6.7	5.2	4.9	5.6
65 years and over.....	4.8	4.2	5.5	4.6	4.0	5.2
18 years and over.....	64.0	63.0	65.0	61.4	60.4	62.4
21 years and over.....	58.3	57.4	59.2	54.7	53.4	56.0
Median age.....(y[ears)..	25.0	24.2	25.8	23.2	22.6	23.9

Table 4. Median Age [of All Persons and Persons of Spanish Orig]in, by Type of Origin: March 1985 CPS a[nd 1980 Census

(For the United States, 1980 census data based on sample tabulations)

Origin	March 1985 CPS	1980 census
Total population.....	31.4	30.0
Total Spanish origin.....	25.0	23.2
Mexican.....	23.3	21.8
Puerto Rican.....	24.3	22.3
Cuban.....	39.1	37.5
Other Spanish[1].....	28.0	25.6
Not of Spanish origin[2]..	31.9	30.6

[1]Includes Central an[d South American and other Spanish origin.

[2]Includes persons wh[o did not know or did not report on origin.

portion for Puerto R[ican families was substantially higher at 44 percent (table 5).

In March 1985, ap[proximately 7.4 million Spanish origin persons 16 y[ears old and over were in the Nation's civilian labor force. There was no statistically significant difference b[etween the labor force participation rates of the Hispa[nic and non-Hispanic populations, however, the unemp[loyment rate was substantially higher for Hispanics t[han for non-Hispanics (11.3 percent and 7.4 percent, respectively). And there is some evidence that the une[mployment rate of 14.3 percent for Puerto Ricans was [s the highest among the Spanish origin groups (table 3).

The money income [level of Hispanic families lagged behind that for non-H[ispanics: the median income in 1984 of Hispanic fa[milies was $18,800, compared with $27,000 for non[-Hispanic families. Differences in the income level we[re particularly apparent among Hispanic families. For instance, the median income in 1984 of Puerto Rican families was about $12,400; in contrast, the median income was about $22,600 for Cuban families. Differences in educational levels, number of workers in the family, and family composition account for part of the differences noted among the Hispanic subgroups (table 6).

In 1984, the proportion of Hispanic families below the poverty level was more than double that of non-Hispanic families (25 percent versus 11 percent). Puerto Rican families had the highest poverty rate

FIGURE 2

Percent of All Families and Families of Spanish Origin Below the Poverty Level in 1984: March 1985

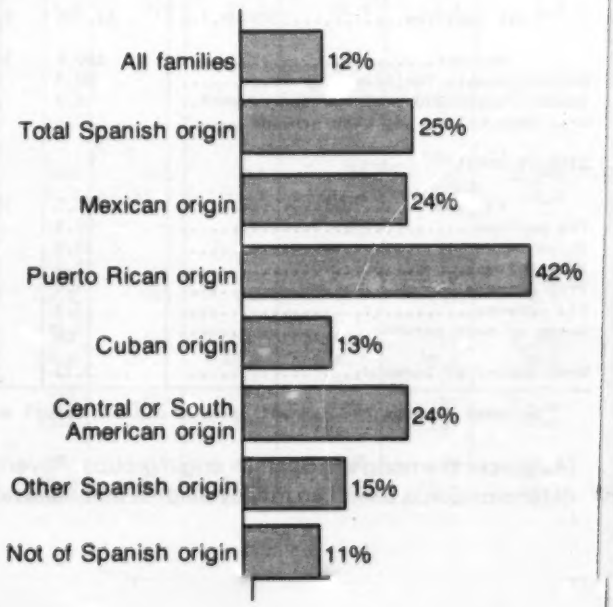


Table 5. Selected Social Characteristics of All Persons and Persons of Spanish Origin, by Type of Origin: March 1985

(For the United States)

Characteristic	Total population	Spanish origin						Not of Spanish origin[1]
		Total	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Central or South American	Other Spanish	
AGE								
Total.....(thousands)..	234,066	16,940	10,269	2,562	1,036	1,722	1,350	217,126
Percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 5 years.....	7.7	10.7	11.7	10.6	5.4	9.5	8.3	7.4
5 to 17 years.....	19.0	25.3	27.4	26.5	14.4	21.6	19.4	18.6
18 to 64 years.....	61.8	59.2	56.8	60.3	65.7	65.5	63.7	61.9
65 years and over.....	11.5	4.8	4.2	2.7	14.5	3.3	8.5	12.0
Median age.....(years)..	31.4	25.0	23.3	24.3	39.1	27.1	29.6	31.9
SEX								
Percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Male.....	48.5	49.8	51.1	46.8	48.7	47.9	49.1	48.4
Female.....	51.5	50.2	48.9	53.2	51.3	52.1	50.9	51.6
MARITAL STATUS								
Total, 15 years and over(thous.)..	182,316	11,776	6,814	1,774	867	1,280	1,040	170,540
Percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Single (never married).....	26.2	31.2	31.0	37.5	19.7	32.7	29.9	25.8
Married.....	59.2	57.9	59.6	50.1	63.1	58.4	55.2	59.3
Widowed.....	7.4	4.7	4.0	4.2	8.8	3.8	7.5	7.6
Divorced.....	7.2	6.2	5.4	8.2	8.4	5.1	7.4	7.2
EDUCATION								
Total, 25 years and over(thous.)..	143,524	8,455	4,755	1,241	721	951	787	135,070
Percent completed--								
Less than 5 years of school.....	2.7	13.5	17.1	12.8	7.4	7.2	6.0	2.0
4 years of high school or more.....	73.9	47.9	41.9	46.3	51.1	62.6	66.1	75.5
4 years of college or more.....	19.4	8.5	5.5	7.0	13.7	15.5	15.3	20.1
Median school years completed.....	12.6	11.5	10.2	11.2	12.0	12.4	12.4	12.7
TYPE OF FAMILY								
All families.....(thous.)..	62,706	3,939	2,251	621	318	406	343	58,767
Percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Married-couple families.....	80.3	71.7	75.7	52.0	78.3	73.4	72.9	80.9
Female householder, no husband present..	16.2	23.0	18.6	44.0	16.0	21.9	21.3	15.7
Male householder, no wife present.....	3.6	5.3	5.8	4.0	5.7	4.7	5.5	3.4
SIZE OF FAMILY								
Percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Two persons.....	40.4	24.4	20.9	24.4	43.1	21.9	33.2	41.5
Three persons.....	23.6	24.1	22.0	27.1	25.2	29.6	24.5	23.6
Four persons.....	21.1	23.7	22.6	28.8	18.6	24.9	25.4	21.0
Five persons.....	9.4	14.0	15.7	12.7	9.1	13.8	9.9	9.1
Six persons.....	3.5	7.0	9.0	4.5	2.8	5.9	3.5	3.2
Seven or more persons.....	2.0	6.7	9.8	2.5	0.9	4.2	2.9	1.6
Mean number of persons.....	3.23	3.88	4.15	3.62	3.13	3.74	3.41	3.18

[1] Includes persons who did not know or did not report on origin.

(42 percent) among the Spanish origin groups. Poverty determination is based on money income and does not include the value of noncash benefits such as food stamps, Medicaid, and public housing (table 6).

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Table 6. Selected Economic Characteristics of All Persons and Persons of Spanish Origin, by Type of Origin: March 1985

(For the United States)

Characteristic	Total population	Spanish origin						Not of Spanish origin[1]
		Total	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Central or South American	Other Spanish	
LABOR FORCE STATUS								
Total, 16 years and over.....(thous.)..	178,587	11,466	6,625	1,721	851	1,248	1,021	167,121
In civilian labor force.....	114,256	7,362	4,427	882	557	853	643	106,894
Percent in civilian labor force.....	64.0	64.2	66.8	51.2	65.5	68.3	63.0	64.0
Percent unemployed.....	7.6	11.3	11.9	14.3	6.8	11.0	7.1	7.4
Males, 16 years and over.....(thous.)..	85,132	5,643	3,402	754	413	587	486	79,489
In civilian labor force.....	63,365	4,427	2,773	504	308	483	358	58,938
Percent in civilian labor force.....	74.4	78.5	81.5	66.9	74.6	82.3	73.7	74.1
Percent unemployed.....	7.8	11.8	12.5	15.0	6.9	9.3	8.9	7.5
Females, 16 years and over.....(thous.)..	93,455	5,823	3,223	967	438	661	534	87,632
In civilian labor force.....	50,891	2,935	1,654	378	249	370	284	47,956
Percent in civilian labor force.....	54.5	50.4	51.3	39.0	56.9	55.9	53.2	54.7
Percent unemployed.....	7.4	10.5	10.9	13.3	6.6	13.2	4.9	7.2
OCCUPATION								
Employed males, 16 years and over.....(thous.)..	58,430	3,906	2,426	429	287	438	326	54,524
Percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Managerial and professional specialty.....	25.2	11.6	8.6	12.5	19.1	15.7	20.5	26.2
Technical, sales, and administrative support.	19.8	14.6	12.3	21.6	16.9	16.9	18.3	20.2
Service occupations.....	9.9	14.9	14.1	19.9	9.7	18.7	13.7	9.5
Farming, forestry, and fishing.....	4.3	6.0	8.7	0.8	0.6	2.0	2.6	4.2
Precision production, craft, and repair.....	20.3	23.3	24.8	17.4	27.8	19.9	20.3	20.1
Operators, fabricators, and laborers.....	20.5	29.6	31.6	27.8	25.9	26.9	24.6	19.8
Employed females, 16 years and over.....(thous.)..	47,120	2,625	1,474	327	233	321	270	44,495
Percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Managerial and professional specialty.....	23.7	12.6	11.2	14.3	14.1	13.4	15.9	24.4
Technical, sales, and administrative support.	45.7	42.7	43.5	42.1	42.4	36.4	46.9	45.9
Service occupations.....	18.1	22.3	22.4	22.8	16.0	26.0	22.0	17.9
Farming, forestry, and fishing.....	1.0	1.3	2.1	0.6	-	0.6	-	1.0
Precision production, craft, and repair.....	2.3	3.5	3.8	2.2	5.1	2.8	2.7	2.3
Operators, fabricators, and laborers.....	9.1	17.7	17.1	17.9	22.5	20.9	12.5	8.6
FAMILY INCOME IN 1984								
Median income.....(dollars)..	26,433	18,833	19,184	12,371	22,587	19,785	23,470	26,951
BELOW POVERTY LEVEL IN 1984								
Families.....(thous.)..	7,277	991	541	260	41	96	52	6,286
Percent below poverty level[2].....	11.6	25.2	24.1	41.9	12.9	23.6	15.2	10.7
Family householder--								
65 years old and over:								
Number.....	713	58	33	3	14	3	6	655
Percent.....	7.3	19.4	19.2	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)	6.9
Not a high school graduate:[3]								
Number.....	3,229	633	367	163	25	54	24	2,596
Percent.....	20.6	32.5	29.8	52.6	17.0	36.2	22.0	18.9
Female, husband absent:								
Number.....	3,498	483	183	203	22	42	33	3,014
Percent.....	34.5	53.4	43.8	74.4	(B)	47.2	(B)	32.7
Unrelated Individuals:								
Number.....	6,609	545	297	138	29	49	31	6,065
Percent.....	21.8	36.8	39.0	49.1	31.2	29.2	17.4	21.1

B Base less than 75,000.
- Represents zero or rounds to zero.

[1] Includes persons who did not know or did not report on origin.
[2] Percent of all families of specified origin.
[3] Householder 25 years old and over.

COMPARABILITY BETWEEN THE CPS AND THE 1980 CENSUS

The 1980 census data on the characteristics of persons of Spanish origin may differ somewhat with those from the Current Population Survey (CPS) because of differences in the collecting and processing procedures of these two statistical collecting systems. For example, the 1980 census used self-enumeration, whereas the CPS is conducted by direct interview, much of it by telephone. While a general ethnic question is used to collect information on the Spanish origin population in the CPS, a direct question on Spanish origin was used in the 1980 census. Also, the CPS Spanish origin estimates represent the civilian noninstitutional population, whereas Spanish origin data from the 1980 census represent the total resident population.

RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES

In addition, since the CPS estimates are based on a sample, they may differ somewhat from the figures that would have been obtained if a comp lete census had been taken using the same schedules, i instructions, and enumerators. There are two types of e errors possible in an estimate based on a sample surve y: sampling and nonsampling. The standard errors prim arily indicate the magnitude of the sampling error. Th ey also partially measure the effect of some nonsar mpling errors in response and enumeration, but do n ot measure any systematic biases in the data. The ful l extent of non-sampling error is unknown. Standard er rors are primarily measures of sampling variability, that is, of the varia-tion that occurred by chance because a sample rather than the entire population was surve yed. The sample estimate and its estimated standard e error enable one to construct confidence intervals, or ra nges that would include the average result of all possib le samples with a known probability. Additional data ar nd more detailed information on the reliability of the es timates will be included in the forthcoming final Cur rent Population Report, *Persons of Spanish Origin in the United States: March 1985*.

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